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wool

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# WORLD WOOL PRODUCTION AND TRADE

World wool **production** declined for the fourth consecutive year in 1972. At 5.9 billion pounds (greasy basis), production was down 1 percent from year earlier levels and off 6 percent from the 1968 high of 6.3 billion pounds. With the exception of New Zealand, none of the major producers recorded increases in 1972.

In Australia, the world's largest wool producer, output is estimated at over 1.7 billion pounds. This represents a 10 percent drop from the previous year's clip and is a result of fewer sheep shorn and a reduction in the average fleece weight per head.

Production in the USSR is preliminarily forecasted as 928 million pounds, down about 2 percent from the record 1971 clip. Reports from Russian newspapers in early 1972 hinted at possible sheep losses due to heavy snowfall and unusually cold temperatures in central Asia. Numbers as of July 1, 1972, were estimated nearly 2 percent below the level 12 months earlier.

New Zealand was the only major wool producer to show a production increase in 1972. Estimated at 715 million pounds—the clip was about 1 percent higher than that of the previous year. New Zealand producers mainly carpet type or coarse wool which in the last 2 years has not shown the drastic price decline that finer apparel type wools have, consequently, sheep numbers have remained fairly stable.

Wool production in Argentina is currently estimated at 397 million pounds—down slightly from 1971 levels. Improved world wool prices throughout 1972 have led to a decline in Argentine sheep slaughter and, numbers by mid-1973 are likely to approach 1969 levels once again.

Uruguay's 1972 production is estimated unchanged from 1971 levels. Improved wool prices have induced farmers to retain sheep for wool production. Slaughter was down 32 percent in 1972.

Production in the United States continued its downward trend in 1972 as sheep numbers on farms were 5 percent less at the beginning of the year. Numbers at the beginning of 1973 were also 5 percent below a year earlier.

The outlook for 1973 is for some increase in world wool production. High wool prices have encouraged producers to hold back their sheep rather than slaughter them.

World **trade** in wool has been on the downturn since 1969. A chain of events starting with the slowdown of economic activity in the main consuming countries was chiefly responsible. The reduction in demand brought lower prices to producers who in turn increased their slaughter of sheep. Depressed wool prices, however, were held steady in 1971 due to the reserve buying of the wool commissions particularly in Australia and South Africa.

World exports in 1971 at 3.05 billion pounds were down about 2 percent from the previous year. Of the five major exporters, Australia, Argentina, and South Africa recorded declines of about 20 million pounds each. Shipments from New Zealand and Uruguay, however, increased. The increase in New Zealand's wool exports went primarily to Japan, the USSR, and the United States. Uruguay shipped larger quantities to the United Kingdom and the EC-6.

Until 1971, U.S. exports of raw wool were almost negligible. Due to unusual price relationships (U.S.

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wool prices were below world prices) it became profitable to export. Most of the exports were to Western Europe.

Wool imports totaled about 3.02 billion pounds in 1971—down 7 percent from 1971 levels. Of the eight major consuming countries only West Germany and France showed any increase in mill activity. A general improvement took place in the German wool textile industry in 1971. In France, consumption of virgin wool by the wool textile industry increased considerably to a new high for the decade.

Wool trade in 1972 was above 1971 levels. An upturn in economic activity and an improved currency picture have caused an increase in mill activity in the major consuming countries. The upturn in demand drew down stocks in South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia to the lowest levels since the mid 1960's. The average price of Australian greasy wool sold at auction in November 1972 was 3.5 times greater than for the same month a year earlier. During the same period average prices for greasy wool in New Zealand auctions more than doubled.

WOOL, GREASY BASIS : 1/ PRODUCTION IN SPECIFIED COUNTRIES - AVERAGE 1963-67, ANNUAL 1968-72
IN MILLIONS OF POUNDS

| REGION AND COUNTRY | AVERAGE 1963-67 | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 2/ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NORTH AMERICA: | | | | | | |
| CANADA 3/ | 5.6 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.3 | 4.5 |
| MEXICO | 13.2 | 11.0 | 9.9 | 9.0 | 8.2 | 7.7 |
| UNITED STATES 4/ | 248.2 | 212.4 | 194.7 | 187.6 | 180.8 | 172.9 |
| OTHER | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| TOTAL | 268.6 | 229.2 | 210.1 | 201.9 | 194.7 | 186.5 |
| SOUTH AMERICA: | | | | | | |
| ARGENTINA | 456.8 | 460.8 | 443.3 | 440.4 | 404.2 | 5/427.7 |
| BRAZIL | 67.6 | 87.2 | 82.5 | 89.4 | 79.6 | 92.8 |
| CHILE | 54.4 | 56.0 | 56.7 | 49.3 | 51.1 | 55.0 |
| FALKLAND ISLANDS | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 |
| PERU | 22.8 | 22.0 | 22.0 | 21.2 | 20.4 | 20.2 |
| URUGUAY | 187.4 | 176.4 | 165.3 | 172.0 | 5/130.0 | 132.3 |
| OTHER | 16.4 | 16.9 | 17.4 | 17.8 | 18.2 | 18.7 |
| TOTAL | 810.0 | 823.8 | 791.8 | 794.8 | 708.1 | 751.4 |
| EUROPE: | | | | | | |
| WESTERN: | | | | | | |
| EC: | | | | | | |
| BELGIUM-LUXEMBOURG | .6 | .6 | .7 | .7 | .6 | .5 |
| FRANCE | 52.8 | 45.1 | 44.9 | 46.3 | 47.4 | 48.0 |
| GERMANY, WEST | 8.0 | 7.3 | 7.7 | 7.9 | 7.9 | 8.2 |
| IRELAND | 25.4 | 22.6 | 21.4 | 20.7 | 22.8 | 23.0 |
| ITALY | 31.6 | 29.3 | 29.0 | 27.6 | 27.1 | 27.9 |
| NETHERLANDS | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| UNITED KINGDOM | 128.2 | 119.0 | 104.0 | 98.0 | 96.0 | 97.0 |
| TOTAL EC | 249.6 | 227.1 | 210.9 | 204.3 | 204.8 | 207.5 |
| GREECE | 17.9 | 17.4 | 17.3 | 16.9 | 17.0 | 16.3 |
| PORTUGAL | 29.8 | 29.5 | 28.8 | 22.9 | 5/22.0 | 22.0 |
| SPAIN | 80.2 | 76.1 | 73.7 | 74.5 | 65.6 | 58.4 |
| OTHER | 20.6 | 21.9 | 21.0 | 20.0 | 19.5 | 19.0 |
| TOTAL WESTERN EUROPE | 398.0 | 371.9 | 351.8 | 338.6 | 328.9 | 323.3 |
| EASTERN: | | | | | | |
| BULGARIA | 56.2 | 63.7 | 62.4 | 63.5 | 65.5 | 69.1 |
| GERMANY, EAST | 17.6 | 17.2 | 15.4 | 19.8 | 17.6 | 17.5 |
| HUNGARY | 22.2 | 24.1 | 23.9 | 21.6 | 19.0 | 16.1 |
| POLAND | 17.0 | 19.5 | 19.6 | 19.6 | 19.6 | 19.8 |
| ROMANIA | 56.2 | 67.4 | 67.9 | 65.5 | 65.0 | 65.1 |
| YUGOSLAVIA | 28.6 | 29.8 | 27.9 | 26.4 | 25.4 | 24.3 |
| OTHER | 11.0 | 13.5 | 14.7 | 15.1 | 15.1 | 15.1 |
| TOTAL EASTERN EUROPE | 208.8 | 235.2 | 231.9 | 231.5 | 227.2 | 227.1 |
| TOTAL EUROPE | 606.8 | 607.0 | 583.7 | 570.1 | 556.1 | 550.4 |
| U.S.S.R. | 809.4 | 915.1 | 860.0 | 914.5 | 5/945.8 | 5/928.1 |
| AFRICA: | | | | | | |
| MOROCCO | 28.6 | 33.1 | 37.5 | 34.2 | 29.8 | 30.9 |
| SOUTH AFRICA 6/ | 324.2 | 334.6 | 340.6 | 279.2 | 264.5 | 250.2 |
| TUNISIA | 9.4 | 9.8 | 9.6 | 9.2 | 8.9 | 7.9 |
| OTHER | 39.0 | 42.3 | 42.3 | 42.2 | 42.2 | 42.1 |
| TOTAL | 401.2 | 419.7 | 430.0 | 364.7 | 345.3 | 331.1 |
| ASIA: | | | | | | |
| INDIA | 78.2 | 01.6 | 77.2 | 79.4 | 81.6 | 82.7 |
| IRAN | 41.4 | 43.0 | 43.7 | 43.2 | 41.9 | 40.9 |
| IRAQ | 28.0 | 29.1 | 29.1 | 30.0 | 30.0 | 30.0 |
| PAKISTAN | 37.0 | 46.0 | 45.0 | 44.0 | 44.0 | 5/44.2 |
| SYRIA ARAB REP | 27.4 | 28.0 | 28.0 | 28.0 | 28.0 | 28.0 |
| TURKEY | 96.2 | 104.7 | 105.8 | 104.7 | 105.8 | 105.8 |
| OTHER | 266.6 | 287.9 | 284.4 | 291.4 | 298.3 | 5/321.4 |
| TOTAL | 574.8 | 620.3 | 613.2 | 620.6 | 629.5 | 652.9 |
| OCEANIA: | | | | | | |
| AUSTRALIA | 1,752.6 | 1,947.8 | 2,035.7 | 1,952.2 | 1,916.0 | 5/1,739.9 |
| NEW ZEALAND | 674.6 | 731.7 | 723.1 | 736.1 | 710.5 | 5/ 705.5 |
| TOTAL | 2,427.2 | 2,679.5 | 2,758.8 | 2,688.3 | 2,626.5 | 2,445.4 |
| WORLD TOTAL | 5,898.0 | 6,294.7 | 6,247.5 | 6,155.0 | 6,006.2 | 5,845.8 |

NOTE: TOTALS MAY NOT ADD DUE TO ROUNDING.
1/ INCLUDES SHORN, PULLED WOOL, AND WOOL EXPORTED ON SKINS WITH THE LATTER TWO CONVERTED TO A GREASY BASIS. WOOL PRODUCED IN THE SPRING IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE IS COMBINED WITH THAT PRODUCED IN THE SEASON BEGINNING JULY 1 OR OCTOBER 1 OF THE SAME YEAR IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE.
2/ PRELIMINARY.
3/ EXCLUDES PULLED WOOL.
4/ INCLUDES PULLED WOOL CONVERTED TO A GREASY BASIS USING 1.7 CONVERSION FACTOR.
5/ REVISED SINCE LAST PUBLISHED IN AUGUST IN THE WORLD AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND TRADE.
6/ INCLUDES REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA, LESOTHO, AND SOUTH WEST AFRICA.

FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE. PREPARED OR ESTIMATED ON THE BASIS OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS, OTHER FOREIGN SOURCE MATERIALS, REPORTS OF U.S. AGRICULTURAL ATTACHES AND FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS, RESULTS OF OFFICE RESEARCH, AND RELATED INFORMATION.

Wool (actual weight): International trade, average 1961-65, annual 1969-71

| Continent and country | Average 1961-65 | | 1969 | | 1970 | | 1971 1/ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports |
| | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds |
| North America: | | | | | | | | |
| Canada | 3,294 | 18,535 | 1,835 | 15,204 | 1,841 | 11,415 | 1,307 | 9,163 |
| United States | 2/ 270 | 343,962 | 2/ 196 | 249,519 | 2/ 200 | 201,631 | 2/ 6,318 | 160,518 |
| Mexico | --- | 21,473 | --- | 31,744 | --- | 21,142 | --- | 22,187 |
| Total North America | 3,564 | 383,970 | 2,031 | 296,467 | 2,041 | 234,188 | 7,625 | 191,868 |
| South America: | | | | | | | | |
| Argentina | 282,799 | --- | 222,560 | --- | 209,525 | --- | 186,619 | --- |
| Brazil | 15,112 | 2,353 | 42,521 | 939 | 33,444 | 869 | 29,762 | 992 |
| Chile | 15,260 | 1,763 | 23,803 | 2,205 | 19,487 | 4,627 | 8,818 | 2,205 |
| Colombia | --- | 9,877 | --- | 12,749 | 20 | 13,307 | 11 | 8,062 |
| Falkland Islands | 4,879 | --- | 4,600 | --- | 3,100 | --- | --- | --- |
| Peru | 6,066 | 11 | 6,134 | 100 | 4,667 | 100 | --- | --- |
| Uruguay | 107,110 | --- | 84,348 | --- | 98,501 | --- | 103,519 | --- |
| Total South America 3/ | 431,226 | 14,004 | 383,966 | 15,993 | 368,744 | 18,903 | 336,229 | 11,359 |
| Europe: | | | | | | | | |
| Western: | | | | | | | | |
| EC: | | | | | | | | |
| Belgium-Luxembourg | 45,556 | 226,866 | 36,821 | 213,262 | 31,705 | 210,078 | 23,109 | 166,732 |
| Denmark | 1,705 | 6,391 | 989 | 7,853 | 960 | 8,385 | 893 | 8,372 |
| France | 76,495 | 354,986 | 85,374 | 355,565 | 71,112 | 349,537 | 73,748 | 377,090 |
| Germany, West | 9,956 | 225,195 | 11,887 | 241,307 | 11,814 | 216,935 | 9,634 | 245,460 |
| Ireland | 22,778 | 12,091 | 18,670 | 17,776 | 17,436 | 18,489 | 20,585 | 17,886 |
| Italy | 7,311 | 282,858 | 4,962 | 299,536 | 4,343 | 282,579 | 4,519 | 229,984 |
| Netherlands | 10,632 | 31,615 | 10,518 | 30,672 | 7,557 | 24,586 | 3,479 | 26,175 |
| United Kingdom | 56,928 | 604,124 | 38,997 | 516,540 | 34,714 | 452,941 | 38,047 | 353,899 |
| Total EC | 231,361 | 1,744,126 | 208,218 | 1,682,511 | 179,641 | 1,563,530 | 174,014 | 1,425,598 |
| Austria | 351 | 14,948 | 364 | 11,248 | 104 | 9,083 | 38 | 9,228 |
| Finland | 10 | 3,283 | 299 | 3,198 | 309 | 2,920 | 21 | 3,642 |
| Greece | 143 | 4,436 | 254 | 10,728 | 90 | 24,460 | 275 | 24,116 |
| Iceland | 944 | 160 | 750 | 200 | 833 | 57 | 545 | 289 |
| Norway | 2,701 | 3,292 | 4,072 | 4,034 | 3,582 | 4,755 | 4,555 | 4,158 |
| Portugal | 1,520 | 12,022 | 481 | 14,786 | 1,828 | 20,646 | 743 | 11,393 |
| Spain | 4,344 | 20,567 | 6,019 | 46,669 | 5,170 | 46,742 | 8,197 | 37,699 |
| Sweden | 1,606 | 10,904 | 1,047 | 7,359 | 1,735 | 6,254 | 1,107 | 5,331 |
| Switzerland | 862 | 14,678 | 1,239 | 9,954 | 1,182 | 9,963 | 1,215 | 11,362 |
| Total Western Europe | 243,842 | 1,828,416 | 222,743 | 1,790,687 | 194,474 | 1,688,410 | 190,710 | 1,532,816 |
| Eastern: | | | | | | | | |
| Bulgaria | --- | 3,440 | --- | 7,064 | --- | 5,163 | --- | --- |
| Czechoslovakia | --- | 46,720 | --- | 49,383 | --- | 43,431 | --- | --- |
| Germany, East | --- | 50,500 | --- | 48,630 | --- | 43,810 | --- | 44,533 |
| Hungary | 1,585 | 7,085 | 5,944 | 9,445 | 4,063 | 7,430 | 3,073 | 6,160 |
| Poland | --- | 37,042 | --- | 37,357 | --- | 36,277 | --- | 40,366 |
| Romania | 2,180 | 2,540 | 5,291 | 4,630 | 3,086 | 5,072 | --- | --- |
| Yugoslavia | 899 | 27,004 | 2,258 | 37,159 | 743 | 47,243 | 1,071 | 58,605 |
| Total Eastern Europe 3/ | 4,664 | 174,331 | 13,493 | 193,668 | 7,892 | 188,426 | 7,144 | 203,164 |
| Total Europe 3/ | 248,506 | 2,002,747 | 236,236 | 1,984,355 | 202,366 | 1,876,836 | 197,854 | 1,735,980 |

(continued

Wool (actual weight): International trade, average 1961-65, annual 1969-71 (continued)

| Continent and country | Average 1961-65 | | 1969 | | 1970 | | 1971 1/ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports |
| | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds | 1,000 pounds |
| USSR | 56,920 | 107,020 | 52,469 | 167,109 | 39,021 | 182,320 | 31,746 | 189,816 |
| Africa: | | | | | | | | |
| Algeria | 337 | 660 | 654 | 3,057 | 461 | 3,481 | --- | --- |
| Libya | 1,496 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Morocco | 3,849 | 458 | 1,175 | 556 | 937 | 2,368 | 831 | 3,416 |
| Tunisia | 420 | 270 | --- | 736 | --- | 2,110 | 42 | 2,802 |
| UAR (Egypt) | 16 | 2,764 | 57 | 15,860 | 60 | 18,600 | --- | --- |
| Kenya | 2,973 | 41 | 4,015 | --- | 3,693 | --- | 2,897 | --- |
| South Africa 4/ | 260,911 | 8,630 | 258,545 | 8,927 | 204,875 | 7,736 | 188,661 | 7,351 |
| Total Africa 3/ | 270,002 | 12,823 | 266,446 | 29,136 | 212,025 | 34,548 | 194,891 | 35,369 |
| Asia: | | | | | | | | |
| Cyprus | 1,084 | --- | 784 | --- | 1,124 | --- | 996 | --- |
| Iran | 7,419 | 4,031 | 1,328 | 14,433 | --- | 16,841 | 20 | 18,165 |
| Iraq | 9,720 | 364 | 8,289 | 992 | 8,928 | 1,367 | --- | --- |
| Israel | 120 | 2,162 | 2 | 7,996 | 9 | 9,098 | 2 | 10,412 |
| Jordan | 298 | 916 | 40 | 400 | 69 | 195 | --- | --- |
| Lebanon | 7,796 | 5,046 | 12,000 | 10,000 | 16,018 | 9,234 | 15,258 | 8,957 |
| Turkey | 10,072 | 21,340 | 2,740 | 18,691 | --- | 17,773 | --- | 20,472 |
| Syrian Arab Republic | 12,566 | 265 | 12,826 | 1,355 | 10,986 | 802 | --- | --- |
| China: | | | | | | | | |
| Mainland | 34,452 | 32,118 | 23,423 | 15,853 | 10,674 | 13,607 | --- | --- |
| Taiwan | --- | 3,056 | 5 | 26,942 | 50 | 35,931 | 88 | 36,967 |
| Afghanistan | 10,369 | 0 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| India | 24,630 | 14,328 | 17,480 | 36,107 | 14,627 | 44,603 | 13,135 | 35,752 |
| Japan | 880 | 520,477 | 617 | 696,076 | 1,413 | 706,592 | 452 | 678,616 |
| Korea, Republic of | --- | 5,374 | 8 | 8,563 | 6 | 6,506 | 11 | 8,697 |
| Pakistan | 25,574 | 1,320 | 20,614 | 2,100 | 11,171 | 3,200 | 10,325 | 3,000 |
| Total Asia 3/ | 144,980 | 610,797 | 111,456 | 839,508 | 86,375 | 865,749 | 82,257 | 832,001 |
| Oceania: | | | | | | | | |
| Australia | 1,166,540 | 7,780 | 1,621,179 | 15,200 | 1,557,088 | 15,538 | 1,539,450 | 19,860 |
| New Zealand | 553,520 | 1,800 | 713,891 | 2,900 | 637,091 | 3,700 | 663,166 | 4,100 |
| Total Oceania | 1,720,060 | 9,580 | 2,335,070 | 18,100 | 2,194,179 | 19,238 | 2,202,616 | 23,960 |
| Total world 3/ 5/ | 2,875,258 | 3,140,941 | 3,387,674 | 3,350,668 | 3,104,752 | 3,231,782 | 3,053,218 | 3,020,353 |

1/ Preliminary.
2/ Washed, scoured or clean basis.
3/ Includes allowances for missing data for countries shown.
4/ Includes exports from South West Africa.
5/ Excludes wool on skins, re-exports where possible; imports in most cases refer to gross imports.

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